

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claim 10 has been amended by deleting, in effect, the step of forming the gas hydrate inhibitor prior to the step of adding it to the liquid or gas, and by replacing "composed of" with --comprising--. Claim 16 has been canceled as redundant. Claim 17 has been amended to depend on Claim 10. Claim 18 has been amended to be consistent with Claim 10. Claims 19 and 25 have been amended by deleting members of the Markush group that were within the terms of other members of the Markush group. Claims 22-24 have been canceled. Remaining amendments are clerical/grammatical in nature.

New Claims 28-45 have been added. Claim 28 is supported in the specification in the examples at page 5, line 19ff. Claims 29 and 30 are supported in the specification at page 3, lines 41-43 and page 4, lines 1-3, respectively. Claims 31-33 are analogous to Claims 28-30, respectively, but depend on Claim 18. Claims 34 and 35 are drawn to preferred embodiments and are supported by the pending claims. Claims 36-45 are drawn to the subject matter deleted by the above-discussed amendment to Claims 19 and 25.

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. Claims 10-15, 17-21 and 25-45 are now pending in the application.

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended to Applicants' attorney during the interview held August 14, 2007, in the above-identified application. During the interview, Applicants' attorney explained the presently-claimed invention and why it is patentable over the applied prior art. The discussion is summarized and expanded upon below.

The rejection of Claims 10-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over, US 5,848,644 (Velly et al) or WO 93/25798 (Anselme et al), is respectfully traversed.

Velly et al discloses a gas hydrate inhibitor comprising a mixture of at least two organosoluble additives, one of which contains at least one copolymer of an alkyl(meth)acrylate and a nitrogen-containing monomer (column 1, lines 6-15), as shown by formula (A)_n(B)_m (column 3, line 20ff). In said formula, R₂ is at least 10 carbon atoms (column 3, lines 35-36). Thus, the alkyl of the alkyl(meth)acrylate must contain at least ten carbon atoms. In the present invention, on the other hand, the corresponding monomer, i.e., monomer B, is a C₄ to C₈ alkyl(meth)acrylate. As Applicants' attorney noted during the above-referenced interview, there is neither disclosure nor suggestion in Velly et al that their R₂ contain less than 10 carbon atoms. Nor does Velly et al disclose or suggest adding their gas hydrate inhibitor as a solution or dispersion in an organic solvent having a flashpoint greater than 50°C, as required by the present claims.

Anselme et al discloses a gas hydrate inhibitor comprising a polymer or copolymer of N-vinyl-pyrrolidone, wherein the copolymer may be with 2-ethylhexyl acrylate (page 3, lines 31-35). Anselme et al discloses further that their inhibitor can be added as a dry powder or preferably, in concentrated aqueous solution (page 4, lines 7-9). Thus, and as Applicants' attorney pointed out during the interview, Anselme et al neither discloses nor suggests

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Reply to Office Action of July 5, 2007

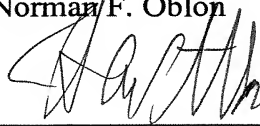
adding their inhibitor as a solution or dispersion in a solvent having a flashpoint greater than 50°C.

In sum, neither Velly et al nor Anselme et al anticipate or otherwise render the present claims unpatentable. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

All of the presently-pending claims in this application are now believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
Norman F. Oblon



Harris A. Pitlick
Registration No. 38,779

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 03/06)

NFO:HAP\la